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Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A

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SUBJECT:JANUARY 24 PRESS ROUNDUP

1. KENNETH H. BACON OF WALL STREET JOURNAL SAID PRESIDENT CARTER'S DEFENSE BUDGET "PROPOSES BANQUET FOR CONVENTIONAL FORCES COMMITTED TO EUROPE AND RELATIVELY NORMAL DIET FOR REST OF U.S. MILITARY." BUDGET CARTER SENT CONGRESS RECOMMENDS PENTAGON SPENDING OF 115.2 BILLION DOLLARS FOR FISCAL 1979, UP 9.4 PERCENT FROM CURRENT YEAR OUTLAYS OF 105.3 BILLION DOLLARS, BACON REPORTED. HE NOTED THAT IN CHANGE FROM LAST YEAR, WHEN FORD PROPOSED BUDGET THAT CALLED FOR BIG SPENDING INCREASES ON STRATEGIC NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND NAVAL SHIPBUILDING, CARTER PLAN EMPHASIZES BOOSTING ARMY AND AIR FORCE STRENGTH DESIGNED TO DETER OR FIGHT CONVENTIONAL WAR IN EUROPE. BACON SAID NEW BUDGET REFLECTS DEFENSE SECRETARY BROWN'S BELIEF "THAT AS LONG AS
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U.S. AND SOVIET UNION MAINTAIN ROUGHLY EQUAL FORCES OF STRATEGIC MISSILES AND BOMBERS, CHANCE OF NUCLEAR WAR IS VERY SMALL. HE BELIEVES SOVIET LAND ATTACK ON EUROPE IS MORE LIKELY POSSIBILITY, UNLESS NATO ALLIES MATCH RECENT FORCE IMPROVEMENTS BY SOVIET BLOC." BACON SAID SPENDING ON STRATEGIC FORCES WOULD RISE ABOUT 500 MILLION DOLLARS TO 9.8 BILLION. DEVELOPMENT OF CRUISE MISSILE WILL ACCELERATE.

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RESEARCH ON MX MISSILE WILL CONTINUE AT SLIGHTLY HIGHER LEVEL, ALTHOUGH PROGRAM IS GOING MORE SLOWLY THAN AIR FORCE WANTS, BACON POINTED OUT.

2. MOHAN RAM, IN SPECIAL TO CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR FROM NEW DELHI, GAVE THIS INDIAN ASSESSMENT: U.S. AND SOVIET UNION ARE AGREED ON IMMEDIATE FREEZE AND GRADUAL REDUCTION OF THEIR NAVAL PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN, BUT THEY DISAGREE ON TOTAL WITHDRAWAL. RAM SAID PRESIDENT CARTER, DURING HIS JAN. 1-3 VISIT TO INDIA, "IS KNOWN TO HAVE CONFIRMED HIS COUNTRY'S WILLINGNESS FOR AN IMMEDIATE FREEZE ON ITS NAVAL PRESENCE AT CURRENT LEVEL." RAM REPORTED THAT L.I. MENDELVICH, TOP SOVIET NEGOTIATOR ON INDIAN OCEAN DEMILITARIZATION, WAS IN INDIA JAN. I6-17, "EVIDENTLY TO LEARN INDIA'S ASSESSMENT OF CARTER VISIT. BOTH SIDES HAVE BEEN KEEPING INDIA INFORMED ON PROGRESS OF THEIR TALKS ON ISSUE." RAM REPORTED THAT "INDIAN ANALYSTS THINK THAT IF U.S. DOES NOT DISMANTLE DIEGO GARCIA BASE, SOVIET UNION WOULD AGREE TO 'FREEZE' ONLY AFTER IT HAS FOUND AN ALTERNATIVE TO ITS FORMER BASE AT BERBERA.... GIVEN SUPERPOWER ATTITUDES, DEMILITARIZATION OF INDIAN OCEAN AND ITS RECOGNITION AS ZONE OF PEACE ARE LONG WAY OFF, INDIAN ANALYSTS THINK."

3. GEORGE WILSON OF WASHINGTON POST SAID IN STRATEGIC AREAS, U.S. WILL CONTINUE TO RELY ON ITS CURRENT NUCLEAR
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DETERRENT FORCE OF 1,054 LAND ICBM'S; 635 MISSILES INSIDE NUCLEAR POWERED SUBMARINES, AND 24 SQUADRONS OF B-52 BOMBERS. WILSON REPORTED THAT BROWN SAID HE HAD HOPED TO SPEED DEVELOPMENT OF MX, STILL ON DRAWING BOARD, BUT HAS POSTPONED SUCH ACTION UNTIL AFTER DETERMINING WHETHER BASING WEAPON IN TUNNELS MAKES SENSE. BROWN REPORTEDLY SAID THREE QUESTIONS HANGING OVER MX ARE WHETHER PUBLIC SUPPORT PUTTING MISSILES IN TUNNELS TEN MILES LONG, WHETHER SOVIETS COULD DESTROY MX MISSILES EVEN IF THEY WERE KEPT MOVING BACK AND FORTH INSIDE TUNNELS, AND WHETHER WEAPON WOULD BE WORTH COST. WILSON SAID MX CRITICS CONTEND IT WOULD INTENSIFY FEARS IN KREMLIN THAT U.S. WAS BUILDING "FIRST STRIKE" MISSILE FORCE SO IT COULD DISABLE SOVIET MISSILES IN SURPRISE ATTACK. MX WOULD BE ACCURATE AND POWERFUL ENOUGH TO DESTROY SOVIET MISSILES NOW DEPLOYED. BROWN SAID HE WOULD NOT RULE OUT PROCEEDING TO FULL SCALE DEVELOPMENT LATER IN BUDGET YEAR IF QUESTIONS ABOUT MX ARE ANSWERED IN MISSILE'S FAVOR.

4. NEW YORK TIMES PUBLISHED ASSOCIATED PRESS DISPATCH FROM BONN REPORTING THAT BREZHNEV SENT LETTERS TO HEADS OF NATO GOVERNMENTS WARNING THEM AGAINST INTRODUCTION OF

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NEUTRON BOMB. DISPATCH QUOTED BONN SPOKESMAN AS SAYING THAT "DIRECT" LETTER ABOUT NEUTRON BOMB HAD BEEN SENT TO NATO MEMBERS AND TO OTHER COUNTRIES THAT SIGNED AGREEMENT ON EUROPEAN SECURITY AND COOPERATION. NATO SPOKESMAN SAID LETTERS RECEIVED ABOUT THREE WEEKS AGO WERE SHARPLY CRITICAL OF U.S. DEVELOPMENT OF NEUTRON BOMB. DISPATCH REPORTED THAT WHILE NO DETAILS OF LETTERS WERE OFFICIALLY DIVULGED, REPORT IN NEWSPAPER DIE WELT SAID NOTE SENT TO CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT WAS ,WRITTEN IN RUDE MANNER."

5. U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORTS (JAN. 30) THAT "DESPITE CARTER'S PUBLIC OPTIMISM ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR AN EARLY SALT AGREEMENT WITH RUSSIA, HIS NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER, ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, IS PUTTING OUT WORD IN PRIVATE THAT
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NEGOTIATIONS COULD BREAK DOWN DUE TO UNACCEPTABLE SOVIET DEMANDS."

6. DEPUTY EDITOR JOSEP; FROMM OF U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORTS, IN DEFENSE BUDGET ANALYSIS, SAID "NEW PRIORITIES IN MILITARY PLANNING ARE CERTAIN TO STIR SHARP CONTROVERSY. ALREADY SOME CRITICS ARE CHARGING THAT PRESIDENT IS UNDERMINING U.S. BARGAINING POSITION IN SALT WITH RUSSIA BY WHAT THEY CALL 'UNILATERAL ARMS CONTROL.' SOME HIGH-RANKING PENTAGON OFFICIALS COMPLAIN THAT PRESENT TREND WILL INSURE SOVIET UNION SIGNIFICANT STRATEGIC ADVANTAGE OVER U.S. IN MID-1980'S. THEY POINT TO NEW CIA ESTIMATE THAT RUSSIANS ARE SPENDING 21/2 TIMES MORE ON THEIR STRATEGIC FORCES THAN IS U.S." FROMM SAID BROWN REJECTS T;ESE ARGUMENTS. "HE CONTENDS THAT PRESENT 'ESSENTIAL EQUIVALENCE' BETWEEN U.S. AND RUSSIA IN STRATEGIC FORCES CAN BE MAINTAINED BY AN INCREASING RELIANCE ON AIR-LAUNCHED CRUISE MISSILES AND, IF NECESSARY, BY BUILDING LAND-BASED MOBILE MISSILE IF CURRENT TESTS DEMONSTRATE THAT THIS DEVELOPMENT IS FEASIBLE AND DESIRABLE."

7. AVIATION WEEK (JAN. 9) SAID PRESIDENT'S PROPOSED FOREIGN ARMS SALES CURTAILMENT POLICY HAS NOT SUCCEEDED IN CUTTING SALES, HAS CAUSED WIDESPREAD CONFUSION IN U.S. AND ABROAD AND REMAINS ELUSIVE BECAUSE DIRECTIVE TO ADMINISTRATION AND PENTAGON CONTAINS SO MANY POSSIBLE EXCEPTIONS. AVIATION WEEK SAID "ACDA STILL REVIEWS ALL MILITARY SERVICE PROGRAMS TO INSURE THAT THERE ARE NO ABUSES. POLICY OF ADMINISTRATION ON ARMS TRANSFER AS EXPRESSED IN PRESIDENTIAL DECISION MEMORANDUM 13 REMAINS POLICY AND NOT STATUTE, ACCORDING TO ACDA OFFICIALS, THUS GIVING PRESIDENT FLEXIBILITY TO MAKE EXCEPTIONS IN EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES." VANCE
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